
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	2600 Woodley Road, NW	X	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Wardman Tower (Wardman Park Hotel and Arcade)		Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	April 28, 2022	X	Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	22-146		Alteration
		X	New Construction
			Demolition

CP VII Wardman 1-A LLC, with plans prepared by Shalom Baranes Architects, return for on-going conceptual design review for construction of two residential towers adjacent and connected to the landmark Wardman Tower.

When presented at the February meeting, the Board expressed support for the building mass and site plan but asked the applicants to reduce the extent of glazing on Building A, provide a stronger sense of frontality to the end of Building A facing Woodley Road, and to look at how the landscape plan could be made more compatible with the adjacent landmark. As much of the public testimony was on aspects of the project outside the Board's jurisdiction, the Board deferred taking a formal action in order to allow the ANC and community further opportunity to understand and provide comments that focused on the design compatibility of the proposed project.

HPRB Review

The Wardman Tower, interior lobby, arcade, porte cochere and the original gate posts to the 1917 hotel are listed in the DC Inventory of Historic Sites and on the National Register of Historic Places. While the site of the 1970s hotel and proposed redevelopment is outside the boundaries of the landmark, it occupies the same record lot (lot 32) and is subject to the Board's review because it will be connected to the Wardman Tower via the arcade. The connection is necessary under the zoning regulations, which prohibit more than one building on a lot, technically making the new construction an addition to the landmark building.

Revised Proposal

As requested, Building A has been redesigned with an increase in the proportion of masonry to glass. In numeric terms, the previous proposal was 57% glazing; through a more solid masonry base, heavier masonry and window framing elements, the current proposal is approximately 51% glazing.

While still composed of two elements of different heights and off set in plane, the Woodley Road elevation of Building A has been revised to provide a more balanced and symmetrical composition, with the balconies centered in the elevation as they are on the Wardman Tower.

The landscape plan has been further developed, making clear how the existing circulation and plantings will be revised and enhanced.

Evaluation

The revisions respond to the Board's suggestions with a higher proportion of masonry and a revised street-facing elevation that relates more clearly to the composed end elevations of the Wardman tower.

The nomination for the Wardman tower contains these passages on the character of the landscape:

The spacious site surrounding the Wardman Tower retains much of the park-like atmosphere which characterized the setting of both the residential tower and the original hotel. The hotel complex was originally constructed in a basically residential area on the heights above Rock Creek Park. The spacious grounds set the complex off from the surrounding community, minimizing the impact of such a large facility and actually enhancing the residential area. The building is surrounded by trees, shrubs, and a generous covering of ground ivy.

Like the hotel, the annex was surrounded by spacious landscaped grounds. Ground ivy covers the steep slopes and the site is planted with numerous trees including ornamental flowering varieties. The manicured grounds provided a park-like setting for the enjoyment of hotel residents. The grounds remain one of the most important features of the hotel complex and now serve as a gracious buffer between the busy convention hotel and the tree-lined residential streets that face it.

The proposed landscape plan is consistent with these descriptions, significantly improving the existing character of the site through a substantial reduction of hardscaping and enhancements to the circulation and naturalistic plantings to create a more park-like setting for the enjoyment of residents and enhancing the abutting residential area.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board find the project compatible with the adjacent landmark and that final construction approval be delegated to staff.

HPO contact: Steve Callcott